

REMARKS

The present Amendment amends claims 3, 6 and 9 and cancels claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 and 8. Therefore, the present application has pending claims 3, 6, and 9.

Claims 1-9 stand rejected under 35 USC §112, second paragraph as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regards as their invention. As indicated above, claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 and 8 were canceled. Therefore, this rejection with respect to claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 and 8 is rendered moot. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection with respect to claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 and 8 is respectfully requested.

Amendments were made to the remaining claims 3, 6 and 9 to bring them into conformity with the requirements of 35 USC §112, second paragraph. Therefore, Applicants submit that this rejection with respect to claims 3, 6 and 9 is overcome and should be withdrawn.

Amendments were made to each of claims 3, 6 and 9 so as to clarify the description of the present invention regarding the characteristic word as being one of a compound characteristic phrase constructed by a plurality of constituent characteristic words or constituent characteristic words included in the compound characteristic phrase. However, with respect to the Examiner's rejection to the use of the phrase "is registered" in claims 2, 5 and 8, Applicants submit that this rejection is rendered moot being that claims 2, 5 and 8 were canceled.

The Examiner's cooperation is respectfully requested to contact Applicants' Attorney by telephone should any further indefinite matters be discovered so that appropriate amendments may be made.

Claims 1-9 stand rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Noguchi (U.S. Patent No. 5,991,755). As indicated above, claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 and 8 were canceled. Therefore, this rejection with respect to claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 and 9 is rendered moot. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection with respect to claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 and 8 is respectfully requested.

It should be noted that the cancellation of claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 and 8 was not intended nor should it be considered as an agreement on Applicants part that the features recited in claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 and 8 are taught or suggested by any of the references of record, particularly Noguchi, whether taken individually or in combination with each other. The cancellation of claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 and 8 was simply intended to expedite prosecution of the present application.

The above described rejection with respect to claims 3, 6 and 9 is traversed for the following reasons. Applicants submit that the features of the present invention as now more clearly recited in claims 3, 6 and 9 are not taught or suggested by Noguchi whether taken individually or in combination with any of the other references of record. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider and withdraw this rejection with respect to claims 3, 6 and 9.

Amendments were made to claims 3, 6, and 9 to clarify that the present invention is directed to a similar document search method, a similar document search system and a program product for making a computer operate as a similar

document search system not taught or suggested by any of the references of record whether taken individually or in combination with each other. Particularly, these claims now more clearly recite that the method, system and computer program implements searching of a document similar to a seeds document from a document database. According to the present invention, a first extracting step is provided of extracting at least one characteristic word from the seeds document including desired retrieval contents and a second extracting step is provided of extracting as characteristic words of the seeds documents, if the characteristic word extracted by the first extracting step is one of a compound characteristic phrase constructed by a plurality of constituent characteristic words and the constituent characteristic words included in the compound characteristic phrase.

Further, according to the present invention a step of calculating is provided according to the characteristics words extracted by the second extracting step, similarity between the seeds document and the document stored on the document database, by using the characteristic words including the compound characteristic phrase and the constituent characteristic words by which the compound characteristic phrase is constructed and a step of outputting is provided of outputting a retrieval result as a result of the similarity calculation by the similarity calculation step.

Still further according to the present invention, the similarity calculation steps includes sub-steps of calculating a weighting coefficient corresponding to a distance calculated by term appearance position on the seeds document between a constituent characteristic word and another constituent characteristic word which are

extracted from one compound characteristic phrase and calculating similarity by multiplying the weighting coefficient.

Thus, according to the present invention as now more clearly recited in claims 3, 6 and 9 a weighting coefficient corresponding to a distance calculated by term appearance position on the seeds document between a constituent characteristic word and another characteristic word which are extracted from one compound characteristic phrase is calculated and similarity is calculated by multiplying the weighting coefficient.

Noguchi teaches, for example, at col. 12, lines 31-33 that a weighting factor is set based on the occurrence frequencies of retrieval words. This is clearly not a calculation based on the distance between the retrieval words in the document as in the present invention as recited in the claims. At no point in Noguchi is there any teaching or suggestion that the weighting factor taught therein corresponds to a distance calculated between term appearance positions on the seeds document as is clearly recited in the claims. The weighting factors taught by Noguchi are simply intended to provide weighting of the frequency of occurrence of a retrieval word in the document.

Thus, similarity as calculated according to the present invention as recited in the claims is quite different from that of Noguchi in that in the present invention the distances between the terms is used to develop weighting coefficients so that, for example, terms having positions within the document that are closer together may have a higher weighting coefficient relative to terms having positions within the document that are farther apart. Such is clearly not taught or suggested by Noguchi

since the weighting factors in Noguchi are simply to provide a higher weighting factor to terms that appear more often relative to terms that appear less often.

Thus, Noguchi fails to teach or suggest calculating a weighting coefficient corresponding a distance calculated by term appearance position on the seed document between a constituent characteristic word and another constituent characteristic word which are extracted from one compound characteristic phrase and calculating similarity by multiplying the weighting coefficient as recited in the claims.

Therefore, as is quite clear from the above, the features of the present invention as now more clearly recited in the claims are not taught or suggested by Noguchi whether taken individually or in combination with any of the other references of record and as such does not anticipate nor render obvious the features of the present invention as recited in the claims. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the 35 USC §102(b) rejection of claims 3, 6 and 9 as being anticipated by Noguchi is respectfully requested.

The remaining references of record have been studied. Applicants submit that they do not supply any of the deficiencies noted above with respect to the reference utilized in the rejection of claims 1-9.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, applicants submit that claims 3, 6, and 9 are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, early allowance of claims 3, 6 and 9 is respectfully requested.

To the extent necessary, the applicants petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, or credit any overpayment of fees, to the deposit account of MATTINGLY, STANGER, MALUR & BRUNDIDGE, P.C., Deposit Account No. 50-1417 (500.41226X00).

Respectfully submitted,

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